



Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office

The ATO 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy



“The Australian Taxation Office acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to their cultures, Elders past, present and emerging”



“ A diverse and inclusive workforce is proven to make us a stronger, more innovative organisation. ”

Message from Commissioner of Taxation and Registrar of the Australian Business Registry Services, Chris Jordan

I am proud to be presenting the ATO's third Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This strategy outlines what we will do to create a more diverse and inclusive workplace and why it is important, not just for the organisation, but for the Australian community we serve.

We are a large government organisation with over 18,000 staff spread across 24 sites around Australia. One of our central aspirations is to have a workforce that reflects and includes Australians of all backgrounds. A diverse and inclusive workforce is proven to make us a stronger, more innovative organisation. When our workforce truly represents our clients, we can act with empathy and forge strong connections. This enables us to understand our community's needs and deliver a leading tax and super administration system for everyone.

We have made significant progress as a diverse and inclusive organisation over recent years. For example:

- we have increased female representation at the senior leadership level to approximately 50%
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation has increased to approximately 2.9%
- we have been awarded Gold level status in the Australian Workplace Equality Index four times
- we are rated as a top three employer in the Australian Network on Disability Access and Inclusion Index
- we were awarded the Australian Human Resources Institute 2019 Michael Kirby LGBTIQ Inclusion Award.

We've also started to really see more of the benefits of our stronger focus on diversity and inclusion; employee engagement has increased as has our ability to attract talent and solve problems creatively. This has led to tangible business improvements, such as:

- achieving our highest ever scores in staff engagement in the 2020 APS Employee Census
- improved support for the workforce and the broader community through technology, accessible services and products.

Our 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy represents our formal commitment to take diversity and inclusion at the ATO to the next level. This latest strategy outlines specific changes in our focus to help us continue to improve. Over the years we have learnt the importance of passionate and committed leadership, which is why we've called out the role of leaders in championing and driving diversity and inclusion. We have also shifted to a broader accountability model in recognition that it cannot be one single area or team that is responsible for diversity and inclusion, it is the responsibility of our entire ATO workforce.

We have come a long way, but we still have more to do. We want an increasingly diverse organisation, where all staff feel like they belong, are empowered to speak up, and always bring their unique and best selves to work.

Sincerely,

Chris Jordan AO
Commissioner of Taxation and Registrar of the
Australian Business Registry Services



“
Our 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy represents our formal commitment to take diversity and inclusion at the ATO to the next level.
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Diversity and inclusion at the ATO

At the ATO, we recognise that a diverse and inclusive workforce improves the experience of staff and enhances our interactions with clients. It builds organisational capability by promoting equity and bringing diversity of approach to the way we work, leading to greater creativity, improved productivity and better outcomes. For our clients, it enables better service, brought about by having a broader spectrum of perspectives and greater empathy and connection with the community. This allows us to make a real difference to the lives of Australians by contributing to their economic and social wellbeing.

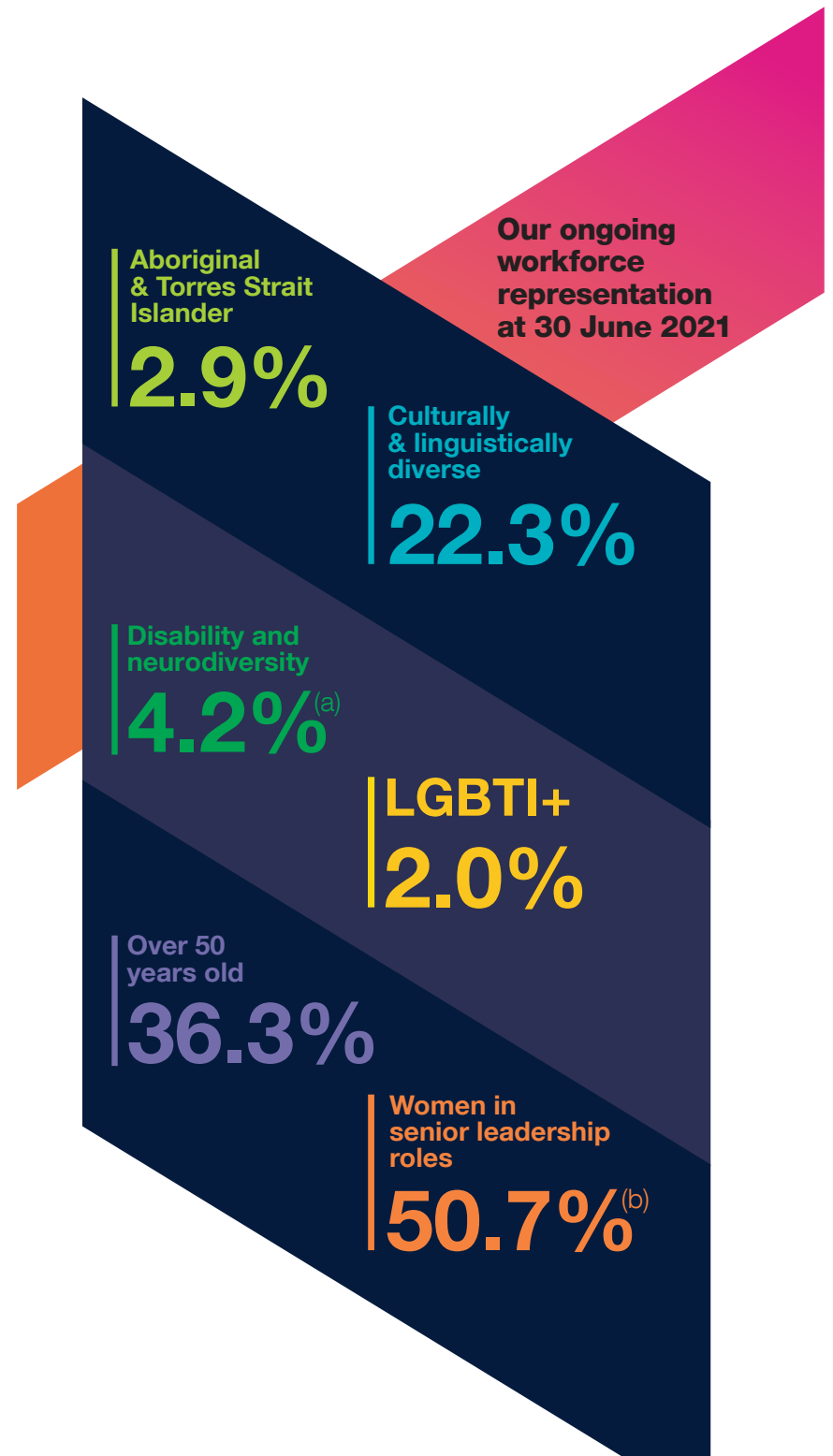
The 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is critical to delivering our workforce and cultural objectives, aligning to our [ATO corporate plan](#) strategic objective: 'We are a high-performing workforce with a focus on integrity, the right culture, capability and tools to deliver the best client and staff experience'.

Since our first Diversity and Inclusion Plan in 2015, we have seen the value of diversity and inclusion strongly recognised across the ATO. We have been rewarded with lower absenteeism, increased collaboration, highly engaged staff and improved organisational performance. We have made great progress in implementing award winning initiatives to build inclusion and attract, develop and retain diverse talent.

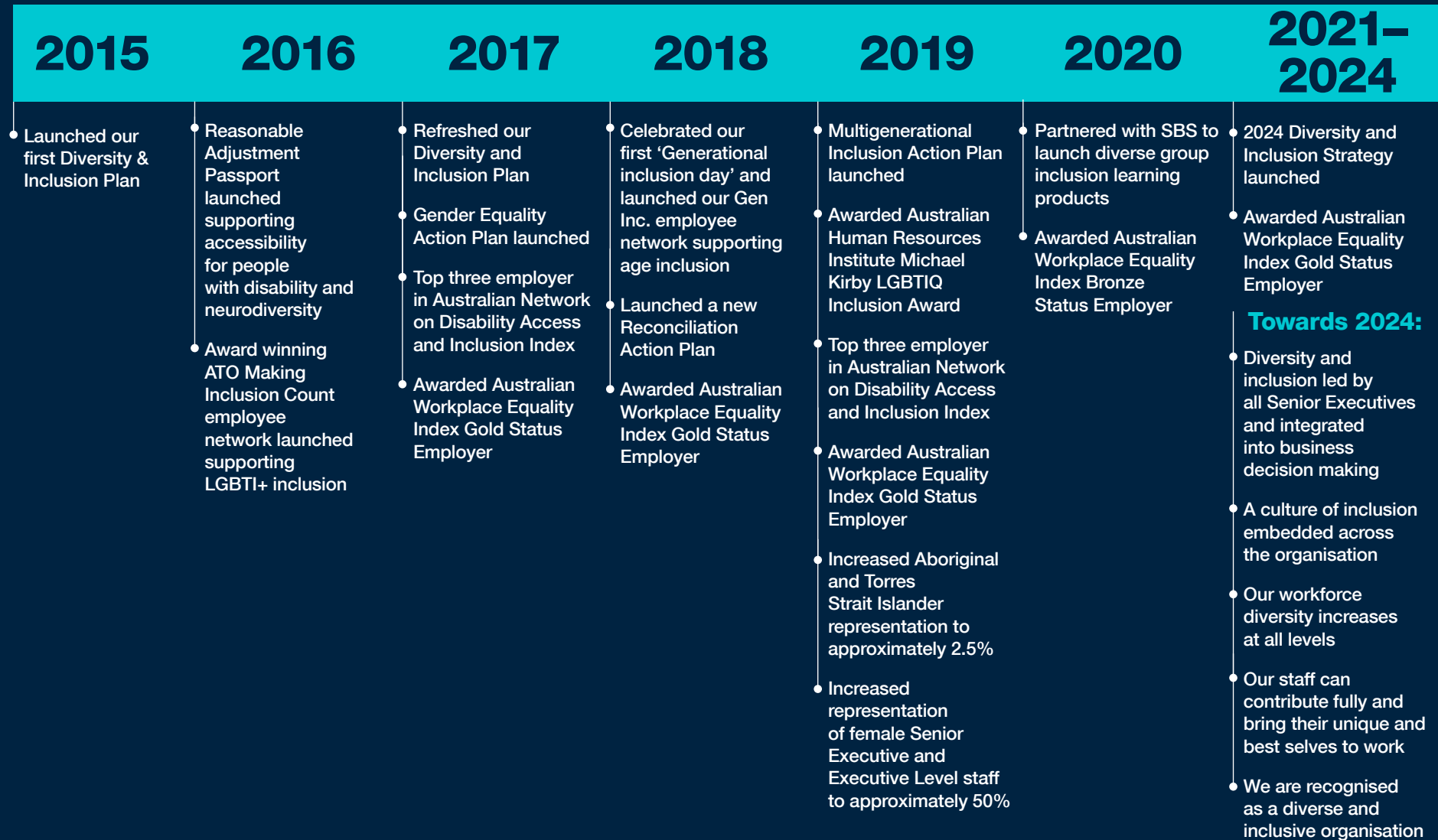


(a) Including people who identified as neurodiverse as per the APS definition of disability.

(b) Refers to Executive and Senior Executive roles.



Our diversity and inclusion journey



Our focus on 2024

Our focus on 2024 places emphasis on the things that will make the biggest difference.

Our 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aims to continue to increase the diversity of our workforce and offer an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone. It also outlines the emphasis we will place on creating more opportunities for our diversity focus areas, which include:

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
- age inclusion
- cultural & linguistic diversity
- disability and neurodiversity
- gender equality (non-binary, female and male)
- LGBTI+.

Our strategy recognises that to lift diversity and inclusion to the next level, we need to continue to build on our approach focussed on corporate led programs and awareness activities. Diversity and inclusion outcomes will be led from within business groups, by all leaders, and integrated into business decision-making. This will be achieved by focusing on the:

- accountability of our Senior Executives and of all leaders for diversity and inclusion
- awareness and skillset of our staff, ensuring they understand the importance of diversity and inclusion and can practice inclusive behaviours effectively
- design of our systems, tools, processes and the ways we work together, ensuring they are inclusive and considerate, allowing everyone to bring their unique and best selves to work.



Our goals

We have five new diversity and inclusion goals to lead us forward

01

Our Senior Executives proactively foster diversity and inclusion

02

Our staff understand the importance of diversity and practice inclusive behaviours

03

Our workforce diversity increases at all levels

04

Our staff can contribute fully and bring their unique and best selves to work

05

We are recognised as a diverse and inclusive organisation

01

Goal 1

Our Senior Executives proactively foster diversity and inclusion

Senior Executives must set the tone from the top to embed accountability for diversity and inclusion.

Our approach

Senior Executives will exemplify inclusive behaviour and actively pursue opportunities to increase diversity and inclusion. A governance model will drive the strategy and hold Senior Executives accountable.

Key actions

- Align governance and progress with the People Committee to direct and monitor the strategy.
- Develop tailored targets for business groups to track progress.
- Embed diversity and inclusion in the performance system for leaders.
- Appoint Senior Executive champions for all diversity focus areas.
- Develop capability in Senior Executives to identify diversity and inclusion risks and opportunities.

What does success look like?

- Accountability is shared, demonstrated by improvements in diversity and inclusion in each business group.

02

Goal 2

Our staff understand the importance of diversity and practice inclusive behaviours

When our staff understand the value and importance of diversity and inclusion, they can create opportunities for their colleagues to feel respected and valued; with a strong sense of belonging.

Our approach

Learning will be refreshed to be more experiential, focused on the skills that support inclusive behaviours and tailored to the role and responsibilities of each audience.

Key actions

- Research and identify current skill gaps, provide contemporary learning solutions and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Create opportunities for staff to share challenges and success in ways that build awareness and understanding.
- Develop a staff engagement plan to enhance internal awareness of our values and objectives to support cultural change and implementation of the strategy.

What does success look like?

- Measures of respect and belonging sentiment in diversity focus areas are comparable with the ATO average.
- Rates of diversity identification in our HR system are comparable to APS Census results.

03

Goal 3

Our workforce diversity increases at all levels

Our different perspectives, experiences and skills allow us to make a more positive contribution to the Australian community.

Our approach

Attraction, recruitment and development programs and processes will be scrutinised to address bias and promote equity.

Key actions

- Update our practices around inclusive recruitment, objective selection and development to ensure they are contemporary.
- Establish representation targets by diversity focus and levels.
- Identify opportunities to increase diversity in workforce planning activities.
- Offer career development opportunities and support for entry level program participants during and post program, including those in diversity focus areas.

What does success look like?

- The diversity in our workforce more closely represents the diversity of the Australian community.
- We are closer to achieving the representation targets set via the Australian Public Service Commission.

04

Goal 4

Our staff can contribute fully and bring their unique and best selves to work

When we create an inclusive environment for each other, we can speak up, share ideas and perform to our full potential. This in turn improves creativity, integrity, productivity and engagement.

Our approach

Systems, tools and processes will be reviewed, ensuring they are accessible and inclusive.

Key actions

- Review access to information technology and accommodation for inclusion and make amendments where needed.
- Review the design of our systems, tools, processes, and the ways we work together, ensuring they are inclusive and considerate.
- Regularly seek the views of staff to inform our approach and progress.

What does success look like?

- Measures of inclusion sentiment in diversity focus areas are comparable with the ATO average.

Goal 5

We are recognised as a diverse and inclusive organisation

Being known as diverse and inclusive builds our employee value proposition and our ability to effectively engage with Australia's diverse community.

Our approach

Our staff will be equipped to engage with the diverse community and we will showcase the diversity of the ATO externally.

Key actions

- Develop an external engagement plan to enhance awareness of our commitment, goals and successes in the community.
- Continue to participate in external benchmarking to track our progress against best practice.
- Develop the awareness and skillset of our staff, ensuring they understand the importance of diversity and inclusion and can practice inclusive behaviours effectively.

What does success look like?

- Our achievements are recognised externally via participation in external benchmarking and awards.
- Staff sentiment around the ATO being an inclusive employer increases.
- Prospective staff want to work at the ATO because of our reputation as an inclusive employer.

05



How staff can support the strategy

We all have a key role to play in cultivating an inclusive and diverse workplace, contributing to our diversity and inclusion goals.

All Staff	
What staff can do	How staff are supported
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support colleagues by being inclusive and report, or constructively challenge, non-inclusive behaviour. ■ Update equity and diversity details in the ATO HR system to allow us to better understand our workforce and tailor services and support. ■ Participate in learning opportunities to build an understanding and capability relating to diversity and inclusion. For example, disability awareness training. ■ Consider opportunities to show support. For example, joining an employee or ally network and participate in diversity and inclusion events. ■ Share stories and experiences to contribute to diversity and inclusion in the ATO. ■ Consider how diversity could enhance the client experience. For example, becoming a community language officer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff have access to employee networks with improved opportunities to shape diversity and inclusion initiatives. ■ Our people policies, accommodation and IT will reflect a more diverse range of needs. ■ Staff have opportunities to provide feedback, allowing us to better understand their experience. ■ Staff will be provided with increased support to develop an understanding and skill set related to diversity and inclusion.

How managers can support the strategy

Managers	
What managers can do	How managers are supported
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Set a positive example for teams by demonstrating inclusive behaviours.■ Encourage diversity and inclusion development goals. For example, undertaking diversity and inclusion training.■ Give visible recognition when staff go above and beyond, demonstrating inclusive behaviours.■ Take action to address behaviour that is not in line with APS Values, Employment Principles, Code of Conduct and Cultural Traits.■ Support staff in actively contributing to inclusion across the ATO. For example, encouraging participation in employee or ally networks.■ Cultivate an environment where staff can share ideas and speak up when they have differing views. For example, actively seeking diverse input from staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Senior Executives will champion inclusive initiatives.■ Managers can reward and recognise staff through our Recognition Program.■ Managers have access to experience-based learning solutions with a focus on improving inclusive behaviour skills.■ Staff from diversity focus areas will have access to improved development and growth opportunities.

How Senior Executives can support the strategy

Senior Executives	
What Senior Executives can do	How Senior Executives are supported
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exemplify inclusive behaviours and set the tone from the top. ■ Reflect on what a diverse and inclusive workforce means to them, the ATO, and the community. Talk to leaders and staff about its importance. ■ Actively pursue opportunities to increase diversity and inclusion in the workforce and decision-making processes. ■ Hold leaders and peers to account. ■ Reward inclusive behaviours and share good news stories. 	<p>Senior Executives will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ have continued access to workforce demographic data to understand diverse workforce composition ■ be provided with insights related to inclusion sentiment ■ have ongoing support to integrate diversity and inclusion into workforce planning initiatives ■ be enabled to apply best practice for inclusive recruitment and objective selection, diversifying the workforce ■ have access to development opportunities to apply diversity and inclusion best practice.

Diversity focus areas

We heard how staff experience inclusion in the ATO, and barriers they face to advancing their career

In recognition of the unique and varied needs of each diversity focus area, an action plan will be developed that focuses on tailored initiatives for our diverse talent.

As part of our efforts to improve the staff experience, we will continue to celebrate the most significant days of each of our diverse groups. We will conduct informal site-based events on nominated celebration / commemoration days to promote understanding, acceptance, and as a means of celebrating diversity in all its forms. Some key priorities for our diversity focus are:

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

- A **culturally safer working environment** through improved tailored cultural awareness support.
- Increased targeted recruitment and **career advancement support**.

Age inclusion

- **Increased awareness of age inclusion** to attract and retain the skills and experience of older workers.
- Structured opportunities to **share valuable knowledge and experience**.

Cultural & linguistic diversity

- Improved visibility of **CALD representation at senior levels** through **Senior Executive Champions** and the **CALD Employee Network**.
- Increased ethnic and racial inclusion with opportunities for staff to **share lived experiences**.

Disability and neurodiversity

- **Improved organisational understanding and skills** to support people with **disability and neurodiversity**.
- The creation of the **Disability Inclusion Officer** role.
- **Improved career opportunities**, including the use of Affirmative Measures.

Gender equality

- Strategies in place to **address gender imbalance** across job families.
- **Increased awareness of what the flexible work** policy means for men and carers.

LGBTI+

- Increased **visibility** of LGBTI+ senior leaders.
 - Building on our current success by continuing to **embed cultural change** to advance inclusion of LGBTI+ staff in the workforce.
-



Progress starts now

We are planning for success

To deliver on this strategy, we are creating a detailed implementation plan – but we’ve already taken steps to realise our objectives. For example, we’ve already aligned the governance of this strategy to the ATO’s People Committee to direct and monitor our progress. Our governance won’t just focus on demographic targets but on reviewing our policies, systems, tools and processes and uplifting skills to influence how we experience inclusion in each business group.

Moving forward, the implementation plan will guide our actions and sustain our efforts – in our ongoing partnership with Diversity Champions and Employee Networks – over the life of the strategy.

Our staff will be kept informed of our progress and success through internal communication channels over the life of the strategy. We will also enhance awareness of our commitment, goals and successes in the community via external communication channels.





“ We want an increasingly diverse organisation, where all staff feel like they belong, are empowered to speak up, and always bring their unique and best selves to work. ”



